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POL 27 CAMB
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SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN SITUATION AND US POLICY

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY GREEN FROM CHARGE

IN RESPONSE YOUR REQUEST, I SUBMIT FOLLOWING WITH CONSIDERABLE
HESITANCY IN VIEW CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY AS TO OUTCOME CURRENT
SITUATION.

1. ATTITUDE TOWARD SIHANOUK AND LON NOL GOVTS SHOULD REMAIN
AS IS FOR NEAR FUTURE. IN OTHER WORDS, DEAL WITH GOVT IN
BEING IN PHNOM PENH. (IT APPEARS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT IF
SIHANOUK RETURNS TO POWER, FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE
SACKING OF US EMBASSY, POSSIBLY IF NOT PROBABLY FOLLOWED BY
BREAK IN RELATIONS IN VIEW HIS RECENT EXTREME UTTERANCES.
ON OTHER HAND, HE JUST MIGHT MAINTAIN RELATIONS BUT HE THEN
WOULD PROBABLY INSIST ON MY REMOVAL AS SYMBOL ALLEGED US
INTERFERENCE.) MEANWHILE, SITUATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
PUBLICLY AN INTERNAL CAMBODIAN AFFAIR WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT
TO CAMBODIANS.

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6. PROCLAMATION OF A REPUBLIC SHOULD BE A PSYCHOLOGIC SHOCK TO MAJORITY CAMBODIAN PEASANTRY AND THIS MAY BE REASON FOR

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DELAY IN ACTION WHICH WAS EXPECTED ABOUT MARCH 25. HOWEVER, IF SIHANOUK POPULARITY CAN BE DESTROYED, QUEENS PRESTIGE SHOULD BE EASY REMOVE SINCE SHE ALREADY UNPOPULAR AMONGST MOST GOVT AND OTHER LEADERS AND EDUCATED. THIS LEAVES VOID IN MONARCHY WHICH MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT RESOLVE BECAUSE OF AMBITIONS VARIOUS ROYAL FACTIONS THAN SOLUTION BY PROCLAMATION OF A REPUBLIC. BENEFIT OF LATTER WOULD SEEM BE SATISFACTION OF MANY OF NEW GENERATION WHO HAVE BEEN CALLING FOR REPUBLIC AND MIGHT PLEASE COMMIES WHO HAVE FELT SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED AT HAVING SUPPORT A MONARCHY.

7. I FRANKLY DO NOT SEE THE POSSIBILITY FOR A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT WITH SIHANOUK BY LON NOL AND SIRAKMATAK. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT SOME OF PRESENT GOVT MIGHT NOT TURN ON LEADERS, IF DEFEAT SEEMS IMMINENT, AND GROVEL BEFORE PRINCE AGAIN.

8. SOVIETS WILL END UP WITH LITTLE INFLUENCE LON NOL GOVT IF THEY DO NOT TAKE STANCE IN ITS FAVOR SOON. UNLIKE CHICOM AMB, SOVIET ONE HAS SEEN FONMIN A LOT OF TIMES RE ICC AND OTHER MATTERS AND I FEEL CERTAIN HAS EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN RE ALLEGED US INVOLVEMENT. AS I HAVE REPORTED, FONMIN HAS TOLD ME OF HIS EFFORTS CONVINCE SOCIALIST STATES OF PURELY CAMBODIAN NATURE RE PRESENT EVENTS AND GOVT HAS PUBLICLY REFUTED US INVOLVEMENT.

9. FRENCH INFLUENCE IS STRONG AND I UNDERSTAND THEY ARE COUNSELING AGAINST RASH MOVES BY GOVT, WHICH COULD BRING ON DISASTER. HOWEVER, IT UNCLEAR WHETHER FRENCH ARE PREPARED GO FURTHER AND I PERSONALLY DOUBT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED PROVIDE TROOPS. HOWEVER, NOTEWORTHY AT TIME SIHANOUK VISIT WITH POMPIDOU WAS FORMER STATEMENT THAT LATTER HAD ASSURED HIM OF FRENCH HELP IN DEFENSE CAMBODIA. DOES THIS NOW EXTEND TO LON NOL GOVT, IF IT WAS GIVEN AS ALLEGED BY SIHANOUK.

10. I HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY IDEA JOINT FRENCH-US-USSR ACTION AND BELIEVE IT WORTH CONSIDERATION, ESPECIALLY AS CONCERNS ICC. HOWEVER, BELIEVE FRENCH SHOULD TAKE LEAD IN VIEW SOVIET SUSPICIONS USG INVOLVEMENT HERE. OUR CONTRI-BUTION IN ICC RETURN, BESIDES ASSUAGING SOVIET FEARS, COULD BE HELICOPTERS OR MONEY TO CAMBODIA. SKEPTICS SEE LITTLE USE

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IN RETURN ICC BUT I CAN SEE NO HARM AND POSSIBLY A CHANCE
AVOID ANOTHER LAOS OR WORSE.

11. WE APPEAR BE WATCHING ATTEMPTED START OF INSURRECTION
LED BY SIHANOUK, WHICH POSING AS YET UNDETERMINED THREAT
IN CERTAIN PROVINCE. SINCE NVN/VC TROOPS (INTERESTING
NOTE LACK OF ACTIVITY RATANAKIRI AND MONDULKIRI PROVINCES
AS OF MARCH 29) HAVE ENTERED FRAY, ISSUE MORE IN DOUBT.
SIHANOUK HAS CLAIMED THAT THREE BATTALIONS FARK HAVE
RALLIED HIS CAUSE BUT THIS DENIED BY FARK G-2 WHO DOES
NEVERTHELESS ADMIT OF INDIVIDUAL DEFECTIONS. PRINCE'S
POPULAR SUPPORT UNCLEAR BUT, AS SUSPECTED, SEEMS STRONGEST
AMONGST PEASANTS. CRUX IS WHETHER THEY CAN BE ROUSED
SUFFICIENTLY AND WHETHER GOVT CAN GET ITS OWN LINE ACROSS
IN TIME DESTROY SIHANOUK REPUTATION. FACT THAT ACTIVE VIET-
NAMESE CADRES AND VN-TRAINED CAMBODIAN CADRES EXIST AND
APPEAR BE TRYING PUSH PEASANTS GIVE SIHANOUK IMPORTANT WEAPON,
ALTHOUGH IT ALMOST EQUALLY IMPORTANT ONE FOR GOVT IN ANTI-
SIHANOUK EFFORTS.
RIVES:

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